(b) and (c) Other Telecom service companies can enter into mutual agreements with BSNL for sharing the optical fibre on agreed terms and purposes, including broadband internet.

Introduction of 3G policy

1350. SHRIMATI S.G INDIRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to introduce 3G policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that once the 3G policy is implemented it would help promote faster roll out of rural applications; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) While no time frame has been fixed for introduction of 3G technology, some of the Service Providers may commence roll out of 3G services in next financial year.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, the 3G technology, due to better spectral efficiency, would provide higher capacity and essentially targets to provide additional features to the customers including broadband wireless services.

Telecommunication links in border areas

1351. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to establish telecommunication links for better border management;

(b) if so, the details of border areas where this link is proposed to be provided;

(c) the total estimated cost of establishing the telecommunication links; and

(d) the time likely to be taken to complete this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The

telecommunication links for border areas are provided by service providers. At present there is no plan under consideration of the Government for such links.

(d) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

One India plan

†1352. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the much publicized "One India Plan" by public sector telephone companies has been floated keeping in view the elite section of the consumers in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these companies are hardly interested in rural India;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to introduce an economy rental-plan for the poor and rural folks;

(d) if so, what are the concessions offered under the said scheme for the common and rural consumers, following the increased rentals; and

(e) the amount earmarked for advertising the said plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir. The option for "One India Plan" has been offered through out the country to all sections of the subscribers in both rural and urban area.

(b) No, Sir. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. is carrying out the extensive work in rural areas.

(c) and (d) The tariff offered by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in rural area are below cost and even lower than the rates prescribed by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India. BSNL has offered lower, affordable and attractive alternative package for rural subscribers especially under economy Plan as per details given in the enclosed Statement. (See below)

(e) No specific amount has been earmarked for advertising of the said scheme.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.